8th February 1924]

A.—(*a*) *to* (*c*) A block 320 acres in extent in Tillaivilagam village, Tiruturaipundi taluk, Tanjore district, was reserved in 1888 and disforested in 1896.

(*d*) & (*e*) The Government have no information, but do not consider that the condition of such a small area would be likely to affect the rainfall of the surrounding tract.

Forest cases in Kallakurichi.

407 *Q.*—Mr. R. Srinivasa Ayyangar : Will the hon. the Home Member and the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state the number of forest cases instituted in 1921, 1922 and 1923 in the Court of the Stationary Sub-Magistrate, Kallakurichi, in South Arcot district ?

A.—The number of forest cases instituted is as follows :—

1921	1,382
1922	1,446
1923	1,569

Extent of disafforestation in the Kurnool district.

408 *Q.*—Rao Bahadur C. Venkataranga Reddi : Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) the names and extent of reserve forests in the Kurnool district that have been disafforested during the official year ;

(*b*) the names and extent of reserve forests which have been recommended for disafforestation ;

(*c*) the extent of cultivable land in the disafforested reserves ;

(*d*) whether any such land has been assigned on patta to depressed classes and, if so, the extent of such land ?

A.—(*a*) The names and extent of reserve forests in the Kurnool district disforested during the current official year are given below :—

Name of reserve.	Area in acres.
Gani reserve (portion)	588
Jaladurgam reserve (portions)	1,256
Peddapaya reserve (portion)	28
Devagudipad reserve (portion)	20
Tellulakonda Extension II (portions) ...	240
Peapally Extension I (portion)	176

(*b*) No recommendation is now pending with Government.

(*c*) & (*d*) The Government have no information.

Tanks in disuse in the forest areas of the Kurnool district.

409 *Q.*—Mr. K. Sarabha Reddi : Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(1) whether the Government have undertaken to investigate the possibilities of restoring the tanks now in disuse in the forest areas of the Kurnool district ; and

(2) whether the Government propose to depute an officer to make an inventory of all such tanks and to frame schemes for their restoration ?

A.—(1) The Chief Conservator of Forests, under general instructions from Government, has already done so.

(2) No such deputation is necessary as under orders, recently issued by the Chief Conservator of Forests, the local District Forest Officer has been instructed to prepare a list of suitable works which should be undertaken when funds permit.

Railways.

Levy of railway cess by the Salem district board.

410 Q.—Rao Sahib S. Ellappa Chettiyar: Will the hon. the Home Member and the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that the Salem district board has levied cess under section 78 (b) (1) of the Local Boards Act of 1920;

(b) whether it is a fact that the income from such cess has been earmarked by the district board for railway purposes;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Salem district board has sanctioned a scheme for opening railway communication from Salem to Rasipur and that this scheme is pending final orders from Government;

(d) whether it is a fact that the Government have now passed an order to utilize the amount referred to in clause (a) above for wiping off the deficit of Rs. 1,23,218, of the taluk boards;

(e) whether it is a fact that the deficits of the taluk boards of many other districts were wiped off by Government by compassionate grants;

(f) if so, why the Salem district board alone was asked to wipe off the deficits of taluk boards from funds levied under section 78 (b) (1) of the Local Boards Act instead of from Government grant; and

(g) under what provision of the Local Boards Act the Government have issued such orders?

A.—(a) & (b) The answer is in the affirmative.

(c) The hon. Member is referred to the answer to clauses (d) and (e) of question No. 226.

(d) Yes. The sum of Rs. 1,23,218 represents only a portion of the income raised under section 78 (b) (i).

(e) & (f) Where the district boards had surplus funds, they were asked to make contributions to taluk boards to wipe off their deficits. Where the surplus funds of the district boards were inadequate for the purpose they were supplemented by compassionate grants from Government equal to the difference between the deficits and the surplus funds of the district boards. Where the district boards themselves had deficits, e.g., Anantapur and Bellary, the deficits of both the district and taluk boards were met by compassionate grants from Government. Many district boards, besides Salem, were asked to make contributions towards the deficits of taluk boards. As already explained, this was done because they had sufficient surplus funds. The attention of the hon. Member is in this connexion invited to G.O. No. 2173, L. & M., dated the 3rd October 1923, placed on the Editors' Table.